



SOMERHILL

SCHOOL TRIPS POLICY

Owner: Bursar

Reviewed: September 2024

Next Review: September 2025



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Guidelines on Educational/Extra-curricular Trips and Visits

Introduction

The Governors recognise the importance of well-planned trips as part of both the curricular and extra-curricular education of the pupils who attend Somerhill. The welfare and safety of staff and pupils whilst on school trips is of paramount importance to the Governors. This policy outlines the procedures for organising a school trip. The following link is to the Government's website with guidance to H&S on educational visits.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>. It is a useful document to use in conjunction with this policy.

Planning a trip/visit

A thorough understanding of matters affecting safety is essential for all staff planning or accompanying a school trip/visit and the aim of this section is to safeguard the position of members of staff. Good practice, legislation and experiences elsewhere in the country necessitate the introduction of procedures and guidelines that attempt to prevent accidents and poor management through the application of thoughtful planning and common sense.

Educational purpose

The aims and objectives should be clearly defined from the offset. This will help determine for potential participants and their parents whether a trip is essential and part of the curriculum.

Responsibilities

1. The Headmaster of Somerhill is responsible for ensuring that the Governing Body's policy is implemented throughout the three sections. It is his responsibility, in consultation with the Bursary, to review this policy.
2. The Head and Deputy Heads are responsible for ensuring that all trips are approved and are properly planned and appropriately supervised.
3. The Bursary is responsible for ensuring that no trip can take place without the appropriate arrangements, fully costed and paid for by the parents, where applicable, due notice of health and safety regulations is taken, and risk assessments have been completed where appropriate. The Bursary is also responsible for ensuring that any regulatory changes are brought to the attention of The Headmaster and the policy amended.
4. The Trip Leader and supporting teachers have a common law "duty of care" for pupils under their supervision. They are also responsible for maintaining order, discipline, and for safeguarding the health and safety of pupils.



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Categories of trips/visits

Category A – These are trips which form part of the normal term-time programme and require the use of the school’s transport (minibus). These are predominantly visits to other schools for sports competitions and matches, and “minibus runs”. There is no overnight stay involved. Transport requirements should be confirmed a minimum of 2 weeks in advance.

Category B – These are trips which form part of the normal term-time programme and generally require the use of transport from an outside company. These are predominantly trips to theatres, museums, historical and geographically important sites etc. There is no overnight stay involved. Transport requirements should be confirmed a minimum of 6 weeks in advance.

Category C – These are trips which form part of a leavers’ programme. Each individual trip does not last longer than a day with the pupils returning to school to be collected by parents as normal. There are no overnight stays involved in the programme. Transport requirements should be confirmed a minimum of 6 weeks in advance.

Category D – These are trips within the United Kingdom which occur both in term-time and holidays which have a duration longer than 24 hours. These may be organised by the school using its own resources or through outside travel companies. These involve an overnight stay or several nights away. Transport requirements should be confirmed a minimum of 1 term in advance.

Category E – These are trips outside the United Kingdom which occur both in term-time and holidays. The duration of the trip is irrelevant, except for vetting purposes. These may be organised by the school using its own resources or through outside travel companies, or a combination of both. Transport requirements should be confirmed a minimum of 6 months in advance.

Typically trips in categories A and B are not chargeable to parents but those in C, D and E would be. In the case of all trips the Accounts Department should be made aware to ensure all expenditure is identified, approved and allocated to the correct budget code.

PROCEDURES:

Trip Master Form

1. The initial approval of a trip rests with the appropriate Head or Deputy Head, or their nominated representative, and is required for all trips away from school, except those in Category A.



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2. The trip leader must open, rename and save the “TRIPS MASTER FORM” to an individual trip folder in the shared area. This will be the live document for the trip.
3. Complete Section A. The Headmaster's approval is required for all category C, D and E trips and the Bursary will sign off the financial information including the initial letter to parents requesting payment.
4. Any third-party provider of services, be it trip-organiser, agency, service provider, transport company, must be pre-approved by the Bursary.
5. Approval should be requested at the earliest possible stage in the planning of a trip using the TRIPS MASTER FORM and confirmed by signing Section A on the first tab of this form. An outline proposal should be made to the Deputy Head/Headmaster with enough information to allow a decision to be made.
6. Once Section A approval has been received, Section B (Finance) must be completed and passed to the Bursary to allow the trip to be costed. Please note this feeds through to Section C for the final sign off.

Once Section C is signed by the Heads, Deputies and the Bursary, the form constitutes authorisation to take the trip.

Risk Assessment

1. A written risk assessment must be completed for all trips. The trips form contains a pro forma and an example is available in the Trips folder. If an outside company is used for an activity, the trip leader must ensure that the company has appropriate risk assessments and that their staff are suitably qualified. A copy of this must be placed in the individual trip folder to be reviewed by the Bursary. Companies in the UK providing hazardous activities should be licenced and should be checked using this link to the HSE [Adventure Activities Licensing Scheme \(AALS\) - Looking for a provider?\(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/adventure-activities-licensing-scheme-aals/)
2. Completed TRIP MASTER FORM must be filed in the Staff Shared area, within the Trips Folder.
3. All letters sent to parents are to be approved by the appropriate Head and, if a letter contains a cost, with the approval of the Bursary.
4. Once details are finalised, the Trip Leader must produce a “trip pack” which will include emergency contact details and any medical conditions of those travelling which will be distributed to those staff that need them.
5. It is the responsibility of the Trip Leader (for sporting fixtures – Heads of Sport) to make the necessary arrangements with the Kitchen staff/Accent Catering for cancellations of lunches and any packed lunches required, change in time of lunches, early departures and late returns. This applies to all trip categories.
6. Within the TRIP MASTER FORM a checklist is available on the third tab. The trip leader must use this to ensure all necessary tasks, approvals and notifications have been made prior to departure. For experienced trip leaders this can act as an aide memoire.



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Overseas trips

Pupils and staff may need to [renew their passport](#) earlier than stated if travelling to an [EU country](#), Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland.

On the day of travel, pupils and staff will need their passport to both:

- have at least 6 months left
- be less than 10 years old (even if it has 6 months or more left)
- these rules do not apply to travel to Ireland.

Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) will be valid if travelling to an EU country.

It is the trip leader's responsibility to ensure all the necessary travel restrictions, if any, and conditions of travel are followed, including communications with the parents.

Staffing

When selecting staff to accompany trips consideration should be given to their experience, and qualifications (i.e., first aid trained) and agreed with the Deputy Head.

With a mixed gender group, it is preferable to have a gender mix of staff. However, there are circumstances where this is not possible. Consideration of this issue should be part of the risk assessment process. Parents should be informed of and have given consent to the staffing arrangements.

If using outside staff/parents, then DBS checks must be made for all residential trips or if they are unsupervised. Third party providers must confirm to the Bursary that all their staff have DBS checks to enhanced level. Staff must consider the nature of the activity and adjust the staff/pupil ratios accordingly considering activities, training and any hazards identified. If a Trip Leader wishes to increase the ratios from the guidance, then the Bursary must be consulted, and the trip assessed.

Adult/pupil ratios guidance are:

<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Pupils' Year Group</u>
1:4	Pre-School
1:8	Reception, Years 1 and 2
1:12	Years 3-6
1:15	Years 7 and 8
1:10	All visits abroad and overnight stays in the UK

Communications

Throughout the organisation and planning of the trip, and during the trip itself, establishment of effective means of communication are important. This does not stop once on the trip as it is important that Trip Leaders continue to communicate with adults accompanying the trip, pupils and parents.



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Communicating with Parents

Once approval has been given for a trip, a letter should be sent to parents (a draft should be approved by the Headmaster and Bursary if containing costs/charges). It may include:

- a) the purpose and an outline itinerary of the trip
- b) the name of the Trip Leader and accompanying adults
- c) the times and dates of departure and return
- d) the estimated cost per pupil
- e) mode of transport
- f) accommodation arrangements (if required)
- g) information about insurance cover
- h) advice on clothing, equipment and pocket money
- i) documents and inoculations required (i.e., passport, Global Health Insurance Card)
- j) in the final letter a request for changes to medical records held on iSAMS of any travelling pupil: *"If your child's medical details have altered from those previously advised to us, you must notify the school matron immediately medicalroom@somerville.org."*
- k) any information evenings for parents to meet the trip leader

This information may be communicated in a number of letters to parents during the planning process depending on the nature of the trip.

Communicating with Parents During the Trip

The Trip Leader will ensure that for trips outside the UK and residential trips in the UK the relevant personnel receive emergency packs for each trip which will include emergency contact numbers, medical needs, details of each person's passport and what to do in an emergency.

Itinerary and Programme

When planning an itinerary and programme thought must be given to:

- a. Will the trip's aims be accomplished?
- b. Is there adequate supervision during the programme?
- c. Is any free time in the programme properly assessed and managed?
- d. If in accommodation, are there adequate fire precautions and are the pupils made aware of them?
- e. What potential hazards are there?
- f. What medical and first aid arrangements are required?

This is not an exhaustive list. Where practical, Trip Leaders should visit the location and assess the venue before a trip takes place. For all EYFS trips, the Trip Leader must visit the location prior to the visit and a risk assessment must be carried out for all trips.



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Trip Finances

For all chargeable trips the trip leader should work with a member of the Bursary to build up the trip cost to reach the actual charge to the parent. Please note that every quote provided must state if VAT is chargeable or not. Somerhill is not VAT registered and therefore cannot reclaim the VAT element. Consequently, VAT must be built into the cost of the trip. Accounts will need to monitor parental payments to the school and make payments to the providers and will assist the trip leader in chasing debts and reminding parents where necessary. Non chargeable trips will be paid for by Accounts and charged to the relevant budget.

Insurance

The Trip Leader must ensure that the trip, either through the school's insurance policies or through the external provider used to book the trip, has the necessary insurance cover in consultation with the Bursary. This must include appropriate cancellation/delay insurance, insurance against a company going into liquidation, medical insurance including casualty repatriation (if appropriate) and membership of ABTA as a minimum. The following school insurances are in place, but Trip Leaders must check with the Bursary that they are still valid and appropriate.

- (a) Public Liability – This covers the legal liability of the school and members of staff in connection with injury to third parties, including pupils, and to damage to property of third parties. Cover is provided on a worldwide basis for educational and other trips;
- (b) Group Personal Accident – This policy covers all pupils in respect of any permanent disability or death. A scale of compensation applies in respect of various disabilities. This cover is worldwide;
- (c) Travel and Medical Insurance – Medical insurance is provided by Chubb European Group SE.

A 24-hour assistance number is:

- **+44 (0)20 7173 7796**
- **Chubb Online Policy Number UKBBBR00411**

The Trip Leader must ensure that they carry these details with them. Also covered by this policy are delays, baggage loss, credit card/money loss and travel document loss. A comprehensive list of cover and amounts can be obtained from the Bursary.

- (d) Occasional Business Use – Employees are insured under the school's insurance policy to use their own vehicles on occasional school business, if authorised in advance by the Bursary. Please contact the Bursary to complete an **Occasional Business Use Declaration Form**. Employees will be required to produce all necessary documents to verify road worthiness of their vehicle and to sign a



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declaration to that effect. They will also be required to produce their driving license which will be checked via the DVLA website.

N.B Parents must be made aware of the cancellation policy for each trip/event. The School's insurance does not cover cancellation, medical expenses, evacuation, baggage, business equipment, money, for whatever reason, for UK/Channel Island/Isle of Man/Rest of the World (except Europe) based trips. Parents are strongly recommended to take out their own private travel insurance.

Procedural Guidelines

Passports and Visas

These will only be required for trips outside the UK. Parents should be advised at the earliest possible opportunity so that they have ample time to apply for visas if necessary and renew passports. It should be remembered that some countries require a passport to be valid for more than six months after the return date of travel.

If a passport is lost on a trip, the Trip Leader must report it to the local police and an application made to the nearest British Consul. It is advisable that the location of the local British Consulate is known before the departure of the trip.

Clothing, Equipment and Pocket Money

It is essential that trip organisers ensure that all participants have guidance as to appropriate clothing/equipment taking into account weather conditions and any activities. Trip Leaders must ensure that any protective clothing or equipment that is required for an activity is available and is worn. It may be necessary for some trip organisers to produce a comprehensive clothes/equipment list for parents. Guidance should be given to parents as to the appropriate pocket money needed for a trip.

Preparing Pupils/Participants for a Trip

This applies to all categories of trips as there will always be transport. The information should be conveyed to the pupils either through an informal talk or through a formal briefing dependent on the nature of the trip. Information should be split into two topics;

1) safety when travelling and 2) safety whilst on a trip.

- 1) When travelling by vehicle, pupils should be made aware of the following basic safety rules:
 - (a) Do not rush towards the transport as or when it arrives; remain in the safe location that the trip leader has organised and wait until called
 - (b) Never attempt to get on or off moving transport
 - (c) Seat belts must be worn, and pupils must remain seated whilst travelling on transport
 - (d) Bags must be stowed in the appropriate place and not block or obstruct the aisle



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- (e) Never lean out of windows or throw anything out of them
 - (f) Never distract/disturb the driver or impede his vision
 - (g) If a pupil feels unwell, inform a member of staff
- 2) Before departure and/or during the trip pupils/staff members should be aware of the following:
- (a) The aims and objectives of the trip
 - (b) Background information on the place being visited. If the trip is overseas, the culture and customs, as well as a few basic words of communication
 - (c) Specific safety precautions and why they are in place, i.e., headcounts at appropriate stages of the trip
 - (d) What standard of behaviour is expected and what sanctions will be implemented for anti- social and unacceptable behaviour (e.g., sending home before the end of the trip). It may be advisable to draw up a code of conduct
 - (e) What to do if approached by someone outside the trip personnel
 - (f) Rendezvous procedures and what to do if separated from the group
 - (g) Any emergency procedures (e.g., fire evacuation procedures) including a missing person procedure. It would be advisable to have a practice drill of these procedures in unfamiliar location/accommodation
 - (h) Any pupils with medical needs and the pupils must be briefed on what to do if they feel ill

Medical Arrangements and First Aid

Any special medical needs of the pupils should be checked on iSAMS and copied to the trip form. Trip Leaders should ask, in their final letters to parents, for any changes to their child's medical records held on iSAMS.

For all overseas trips, all participants should obtain a Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). These are available online from the government website. Parents should be made aware that this may not cover all costs and may require full and appropriate medical insurance.

All trips away from school must carry an appropriate first aid kit. There must always be one teacher/staff member on the trip that has been trained to Emergency First Aid or equivalent level and on an EYFS group trip to Paediatric First Aid level.

All Trip Leaders must ensure that they are aware of any pupils who have special medical needs (i.e., asthma, allergies, epilepsy, diabetes) and must ensure that pupils know what to do and who to contact if they feel ill.



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Pandemic/Covid

Any covid guarantees or covid related rules must be considered for all trips for the foreseeable future. Advice and support can be given to the trip leaders from the Bursary in this regard.

Planning transport

All ground transport in the UK is to be booked via reception. If school minibuses are being requested, it must be specified whether a driver is required. The school is responsible for ensuring that all transport conforms to legislation in that if transport is carrying groups of three or more children aged between 3 and 15 years inclusive that the transport is fitted with serviceable seat belts. It is the responsibility of the trip leader/driver to ensure that they are worn. When using school owned transport, the following points must be noted:

1. Category A trips do not require prior approval or require a trip form to be completed, but it is good practice to ensure that all drivers are aware of the route
2. A risk assessment has been carried out by the school for driving and travelling in a minibus. The results of the assessment are kept in the “glove box” of each minibus. The school carries out weekly mechanical checks on all school vehicles, but this does not preclude the driver carrying out the checks prescribed as necessary before commencing a journey and what to do in the event of a breakdown/accident. **The serviceability of a school vehicle is the responsibility of THE DRIVER.** It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the trip to assess the destination and, if required, fill in a risk assessment
3. Minibuses contain log books which must be filled in at the start of a journey and at the end. This is the driver’s responsibility. The driver is also responsible for checking the serviceability of the vehicle and must carry out the prescribed checks
4. All minibus drivers must have a D1 licence or D1 entitlement to drive a minibus except in the case of the minibus “lite” which may be driven by a driver who is over 21 and has two years or more driving experience. It is the policy of the school that all drivers should also have attended a Kent County Council “Minibus Awareness Course” which must be renewed every 3 years

Other points that should be considered for all trips are:

5. Locate all fire exits on the vehicle allocating responsibility to adults accompanying the trip
6. What to do in the event of a breakdown? School vehicles have “breakdown cover”, details are in the glove box. All vehicles have fire extinguishers on board. When using a fire extinguisher, you should not endanger your own life



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7. What to do for minor medical problems and for major medical emergencies? All school vehicles carry first aid kits
8. If travelling in convoy, what to do if the convoy is split up?
9. Weather conditions/forecasts; do they pose an extra hazard?
10. If travelling a long distance, toilet breaks and breaks for drivers. Breaks for drivers are legislated by law. Trip Leaders are to seek advice from the Bursary on the law and how it affects their trip

Emergency/Incident Procedures

Emergency/Incident procedures are an essential part of planning a school trip because, despite good planning and leadership, unforeseen emergencies, incidents, accidents or injuries may arise. In the event of an emergency/incident situation, there are two control areas: the Trip Leader on the ground and the emergency contact at school. Depending on the seriousness of the emergency, the nominated Senior Leader will take the leadership role at school, and coordinate with the Headmaster as appropriate. Trip Leaders who are leading a trip with an overnight stay involved must ensure that they have contact details of school Senior Leadership for out of hours contact.

1. **Emergency on trip** – The Trip Leader should take charge and liaise with the school's emergency contact. The Trip Leader must carry out the following actions:
 - a) The nature and extent of the emergency established as quickly as possible. Establish that all the group are safe and supervised. (This information will need to be passed to the school contact)
 - b) Establish the names of any casualties, the nature of their injuries, and organise the necessary medical attention required to treat their injuries. This may require calling the emergency services. (This information will need to be passed to the school contact)
 - c) If a casualty needs to go to hospital, an adult, who is part of the trip, must accompany them
 - d) Confirm that other adults accompanying the trip are aware of the incident and their role in the emergency procedures
 - e) Notify the police if necessary
 - f) If the trip is overseas, notify the British Embassy/Consulate
 - g) Write down accurately and as soon as possible all the relevant facts, witness details and any evidence noting also the times. This will be needed as an aide-memoire for when staff complete a report which needs to be submitted to the Bursar as soon as practical. This will also help staff when they are relaying details of the incident to the school contact
 - h) No-one is to speak to the media except to refer them to the school. Under no circumstances are any names to be communicated to the media
 - i) Under no circumstances is legal liability to be discussed or admitted to any third party



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2. Emergency contact at school – is to establish from the Trip Leader the nature and seriousness of the incident. If it is of a serious nature, they are to immediately inform the Headmaster. Once established the school contact should carry out the following (under the guidance of the Senior Leader in a serious emergency):

- a) Ensure that the leader on the ground is in control of the incident and establish if any assistance can be given from the school base
- b) Contact parents using the contact group established by the Trip Leader
- c) If necessary, notify the tour operator/provider
- d) Notify the school's insurance company and, if necessary, they will provide professional advice
- e) In the event of media interest in the incident, the Headmaster/Bursar must be informed, and no statement/information is to be issued to the press without their sanction. The Headmaster/Bursar will inform/liaise with the Chairman of the Board of Governors and a press release will be issued. There is to be no deviation from the press release

3. Missing Child on a trip – Actions to be followed: Prior to departure or on arrival at venue:

- a) When possible, children to be easily identifiable, e.g., school uniform worn
- b) Trip Leaders have group lists and timed plan for the day

If a child was thought to be missing, carry out the following actions:

- a) An immediate head count to ensure that all the other children are present
- b) The Trip Leader will be informed and then ensure all other adults are informed
- c) An adult would search the immediate vicinity
- d) If appropriate, staff at the venue will be informed and a description of the child given. The venue manager would coordinate a wider search of the site using venue staff
- e) The remaining children would be taken back to school. The lead adult or Deputy Head will remain on site as the search continues and to liaise with the Police and meet the parents if they have to come to the site
- f) Inform the Headmaster by mobile phone
- g) Only the Headmaster will ring the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. They will ask them to come to the school at once
- h) Contact the Police
- i) The DSL/Headmaster may consider it appropriate to inform the Local Children Safeguarding Board
- j) The incident will be recorded in writing and the Chair of Governors informed along with the School's insurers



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- k) If the child is injured, this may be reportable to the HSE under RIDDOR guidelines

In all cases where a child has gone missing, the full incident report would be reviewed by the Headmaster and Senior Managers and, if appropriate, procedures would be adjusted.

A Guide to Hazardous Activities

As part of their development it is important that pupils are challenged both on an individual and a team basis. Activities organised on trips can be physically, as well as mentally, challenging and require good planning and common sense to avoid unnecessary risk. Hazardous activities include any activities that are based on water, mountains, moors, heights, sports, and even a usually low risk activity that is away from quick rescue and medical facilities. This list is not comprehensive, and the trip organiser/leader must use their judgement when organising an activity. This will involve a risk assessment if the activity is not provided by a professional/recognised organisation.

The following must be considered when organising a trip that includes a hazardous activity:

1. It is important that parents are informed in writing of any hazardous activities that their child may be involved in. Parents must give their written consent for their child to take part in that activity;
2. Trip organisers, with the advice of the Bursary, when organising a trip that involves hazardous activities must ensure that these activities are covered by insurance;
3. No member of staff may lead a hazardous activity if they are not suitably qualified. Even if just helping they must be certain that they have the necessary knowledge/experience to do so safely without endangering the other participants or themselves. Where possible it is always advisable to undertake hazardous activities at specialist centres so that the most benefit can be derived for the participants;
4. Activities that require specialist equipment and/or clothing must only be undertaken if it is available and serviceable. It is the responsibility of the Trip Leader to ensure that specialist equipment/clothing is worn if appropriate. This responsibility is not to be delegated to an outside organisation;
5. For all hazardous activities a code of safe practice must be in place. This may include:
 - a) Appreciation of the value of planning and preparation; this should also include an alternative activity if for reasons of safety the activity is cancelled
 - b) Awareness of potential hazards and dangers. These must be monitored to take into account any changes in weather etc. that may affect the safety of the activity



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- c) Importance of appropriate clothing and equipment
- d) Procedures in the event of an emergency, accident, rescue, or missing person. How to recall and end an activity if needed
- e) Awareness of the dangers of certain medical conditions, for example hypothermia and Weil's disease
- f) Awareness of any requirements for emergency equipment and first aid kits
- g) The importance of responsible behaviour and sound judgement by all involved in the activity